



**Colorado Charter Schools  
Annual Conference**

February 25-27, 2026  
Denver Marriott Tech Center



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# The Role of The Charter Board in Unified Improvement Planning

Dan Jorgensen, PhD, District Support Specialist  
Colorado Department of Education

Blue Bell  
February 26, 2026 | 8:30-9:30AM  
Hot Topics



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## The Role of the Charter Board in Unified Improvement Planning

**League of Charter Schools  
Annual Conference  
February 26, 2026  
8:30-9:30**



# The Role of the Board in Improvement Planning

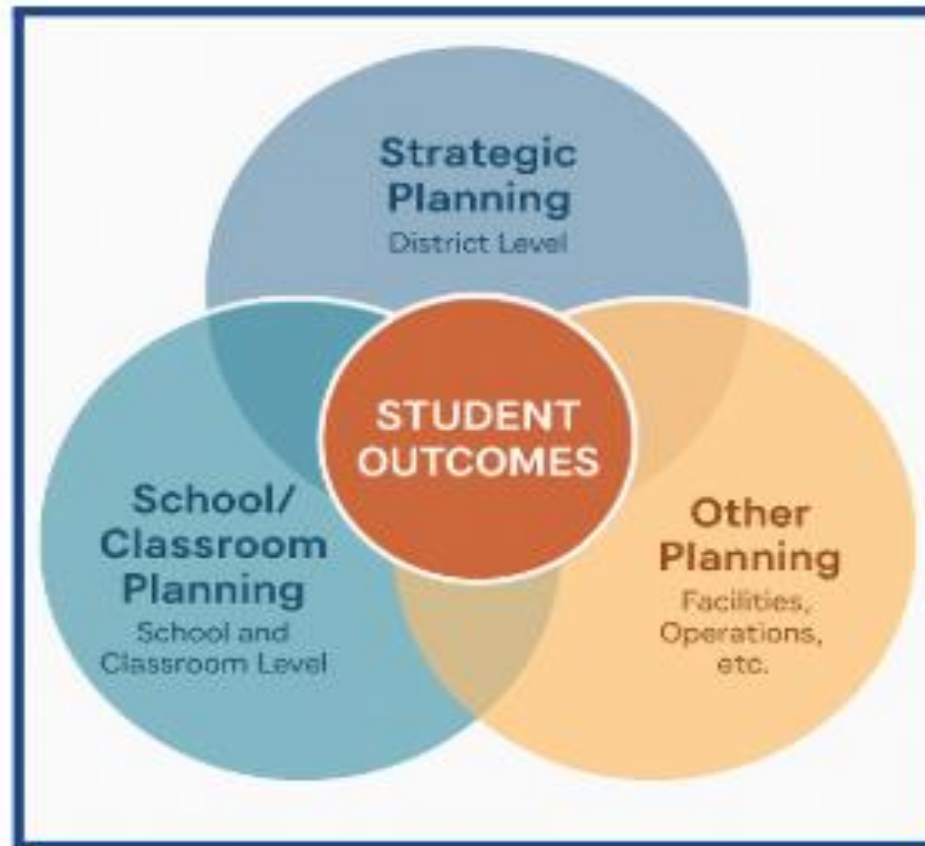
**Session Description:** Strong governance is essential for effective school improvement. This session will explore the critical role Charter School Boards of Directors play in supporting Unified Improvement Planning. Discussion topics will include the key questions boards should ask about improvement plans, how to engage stakeholders in the process, strategies for monitoring progress, and the importance of aligning plans across systems and with authorizer expectations. Board members will also have the opportunity to share feedback with CDE on what training and resources would best support their work in this area.





## What is Improvement Planning?

# What is Improvement Planning?



There are multiple purposes of unified improvement planning:

Alignment  
Best Practice  
Documentation  
Transparency  
Supports

May be helpful to be clear how the school anchors into these purposes

# Improvement Planning: Process and Product

## Steps in the process:

Review data (performance, demographic, process and perception) to understand the current state

Priorities-Lead Identify priorities in terms of student outcomes, including current state and desired future (targets)

Root Cause- Engage in a process to understand what systems need improvement to

Strategies- Identify how the approach the school/district will take to improve outcomes

Actions- Build out the steps to complete the strategies

Progress Monitoring- setting indicators of implementation success and student outcomes to be checked over the course of the year.

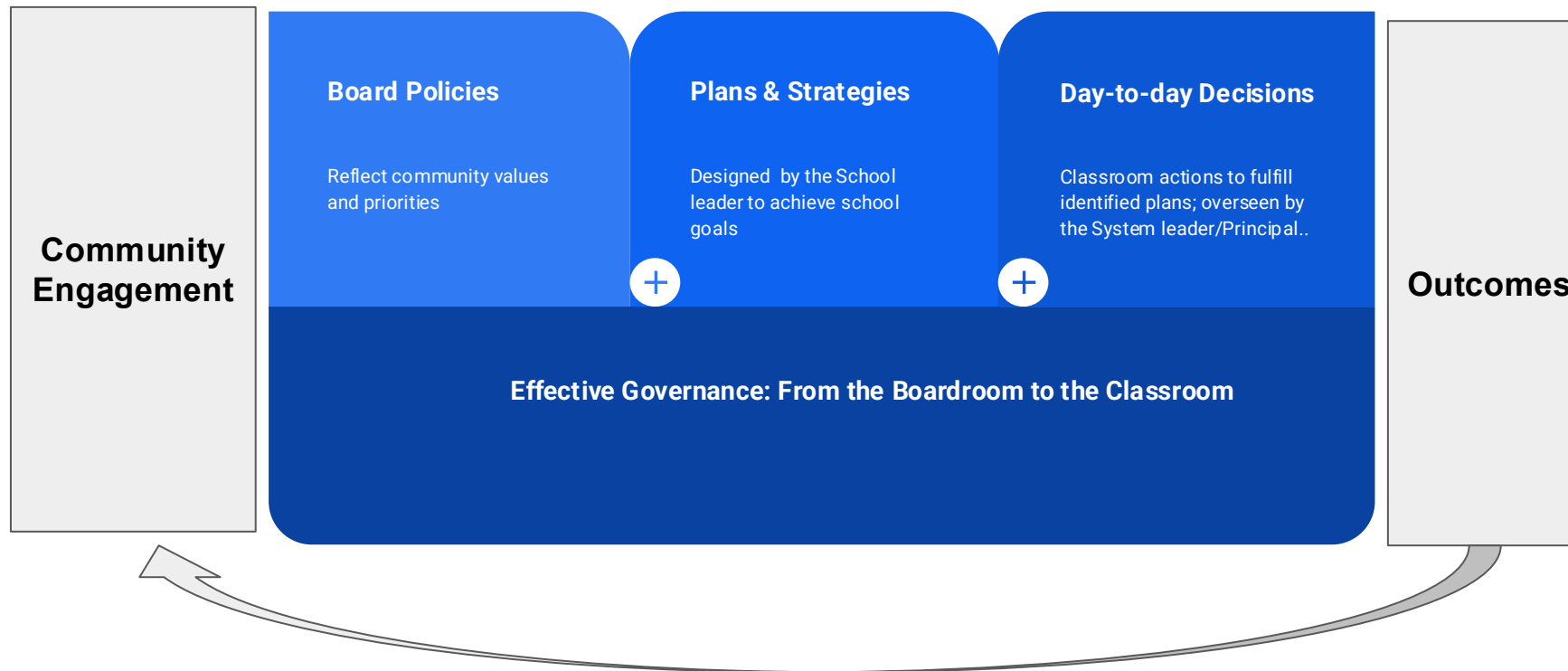


## Governance & Planning: Background

# Planning Processes: Part I

Write down what you consider the role of your board in the planning process?

# Relationship Between Governance and District Planning



# Governance and Operational Planning

## Operational Planning

A focus on aligning implementation to desired outcomes while meeting regulatory compliance.

- The **School Leader** is responsible for the appropriate design and implementation of district activities that adhere to Board policy, statutory requirements, and district priorities as defined by the Board.
- The **School Leader** is not responsible for defining system wide outcomes.

## Governance Planning

A focus on outcomes aligned to stakeholder needs and best practices

- The **Board** is responsible for examining planning processes to ensure alignment with policies and district goals.
- The **Board** is not responsible for implementation of managerial tasks.

# Guiding Questions for UIP Review by your Board



**Table 2: Potential Questions to be asked by Board Members Related to UIP Review & Approval**

For District & School Plan Reviews:	
Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does the plan narrative include Board of Education identified goals, district strategic information, or other related information that would help inform key stakeholders of district work.</li> </ul>
Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How does the does leadership include stakeholders, including the District/School Accountability Committee (where applicable) in plan development?</li> </ul>
Due Diligence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does the plan utilize best practices and exhibit due diligence regarding budgeting, implementation, measurement, etc.</li> </ul>
Due Diligence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does the presented plan meet the requirements of federal/state statute and district policies?</li> </ul>
Monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How will/when plan progress be communicated to the board during the academic year?</li> </ul>
Monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does the plan incorporate any outcomes defined in policy, strategic plans, or other areas that require Board monitoring? If not, would it make sense to incorporate such outcomes?</li> </ul>
Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For the included action plan, should consideration be given to the adoption or revision of any policies that will help support implementation?</li> </ul>
For Priority Improvement/Turnaround Plan Reviews:	
Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does the action plan include a family community partnership plan as required by statute for Priority Improvement &amp; Turnaround schools? What role (if any) does the Board play in this regard?</li> </ul>
Due Diligence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Are the presented improvement strategies likely to lead to an increased improvement rating? What evidence does administration present that this is the case (i.e., if not presented in the plan).</li> </ul>
Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does any identified future action require preliminary board approval, policy change or review? Should any of the possible turnaround options be considered for early action by the board?</li> </ul>

# Planning Processes: Part II

**Examine your prior notes and consider which side of the chart they should be on-governance or operations.**

**What did you notice about where your notes landed?**

**Discuss with a partner.**



## Case Study

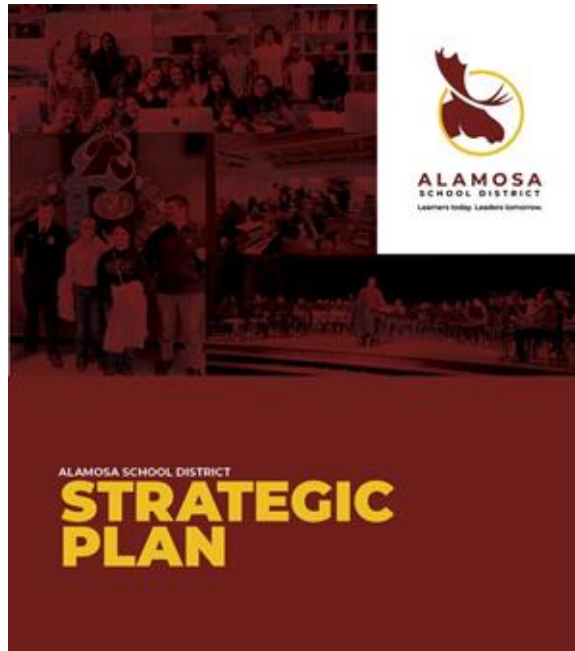
# Case Study: Alamosa School District



**What is the value of the board being involved with the improvement planning process?**

- Understanding of where we are and where we are going
- Alignment with Strategic Plan and Profile of a Graduate
- Alignment of budget—Does our spending show our priorities?
- Opportunities to share growth with community
- Collaboration and process utilized in ASD planning and decision-making endeavors.  
Are stakeholders provided the opportunity to be seen and heard?
- A unified improvement plan in ASD equates to a unified district-school system vs a system of schools
- Congruence should be evident.

# Coherence



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**COLORADO**  
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**Colorado's Unified Improvement Plan for Districts**  
Approved 08/11/14 LIP 001-01 | Revised 08/11/14 LIP 001-01 | Framework, Allocated with Improvement Plan | Draft LIP

**Table of Contents**  
Last Year LIP: [Alamosa 08/11/14 LIP 001-01](#)  
Executive Summary  
Narrative on Data Analysis and Root Cause Identification  
Action Plans

**Executive Summary**

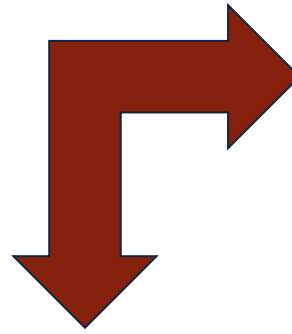
Priority Performance Challenges	Root Cause	Major Improvement Strategies
• Lower achievement	• Inequity and inequitable levels of equity, resources and skills	• Safe, Supportive, and Collaborative Culture (SSC) Data Based Problem Solving • Family Professional Engagement (FPE) Plan
• Inconsistent achievement	• Inconsistent Best Practices, Instructional/Student Teaching in Every Classroom	• Effective Teaching in Every Classroom (ETEC) LIP
• Inconsistent growth on EL and Science in 4th	• Lack of Equity (Equity) & Skills Instruction & Effective Teaching	• Effective Teaching in Every Classroom (ETEC) LIP
• Lack of 21st and 21st-century skills and competencies	• Inconsistent implementation of 21st-century	• Support the 21st and 21st-century Instruction and Learning Plan
• Lack of teacher professional development and engagement	• Lack of communication and culture to reduce inequity	• Family Professional Engagement (FPE) Plan

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## High Reliability Schools Framework

- 5 Competency-Based Education
- 4 Standards-Referenced Reporting
- 3 Guaranteed and Viable Curriculum
- 2 Effective Teaching in Every Classroom
- 1 Safe, Supportive, and Collaborative Culture

# Coherence



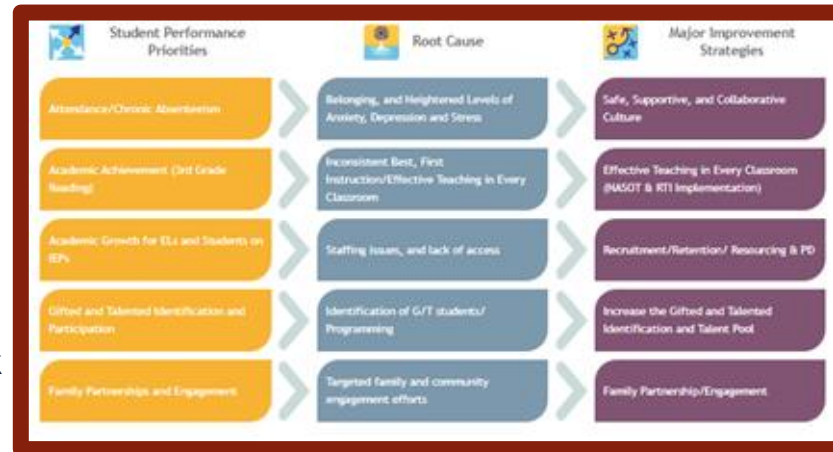
**FOCUS AREA ONE:**  
*High Quality,  
Student Centered  
Learning*

**PRIORITY ONE:** *Students Demonstrate the Graduate Profile Skills*

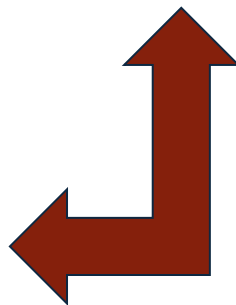
Alamosa students access a diverse set of learning opportunities that allow them to learn and apply graduate profile skills, and eventually, demonstrate mastery of the skills through a senior capstone.

**PRIORITY TWO:** *Effective Teaching in Every Classroom*

Students in Alamosa Schools receive engaging and effective instruction that supports them as they explore complex topics, and gain deeper understanding of content knowledge.



High Reliability Schools Framework



# Case Study: Alamosa School District



## How do we build the capacity of the Board to engage in their governance role with improvement plans?

- Alignment with board agenda: Intentional dialogue and connection with discussion points are evident within board agendas, etc.
- Providing artifacts aligned to UIP, Strategic Plan and Superintendent's Evaluation
- Assessment review after beginning, middle, end of year and state assessments
- Work session discussions with continual connections made publicly
- Awareness is key

# Case Study: Alamosa School District

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**What is the role of the DAC in improvement plan development, and how do they interact with the board?**

- Board members are a part of the DAC and BACs
- Community and school site needs are addressed in the plan and throughout the process.
- DAC is presented with an overview of progress throughout the year to understand the process, progress of goals and action plans, as well as any modifications to the plan.



## Table Talk Activity



## Table Talk Activity

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Briefly discuss with a partner or small group the following questions:

- What approaches does your board use to make district planning decisions more cohesive? How might the practices shared be adopted by your board?
- Where might your Board improve in regards to planning processes?
- What resources or supports would be helpful for your Board to more meaningfully engage with improvement planning- put on sticky notes

Share out any ah-ha's from your conversations.

## Session Wrap up

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### We hope you are leaving this session with:

- A better understanding of the appropriate and essential role of board members within the improvement planning process.
- Considerations for how to make the process more meaningful through your governance role.
- Access to resources to support your understanding and development of school improvement plans.

# Session Reflections

What questions do you still have?

What are big a-ha's that you had today that you are willing to share?



## Contacts & Resources



## Related Resources

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**Colorado Educational Accountability: An Overview for Boards of Education.**

This resource provides a basic resource that explains Colorado Educational accountability, at a conceptual level, while providing additional resources to facilitate a deeper dive into areas of interest by Board members.

<https://www.cde.state.co.us/uip/coeducationalaccountability-overviewforboardseducation>

**Unified Improvement Plans: The role of the School Board in plan Development and Adoption.** This resource attempts to address the role for the School Board relative to the development and approval of the Unified Improvement Plan.

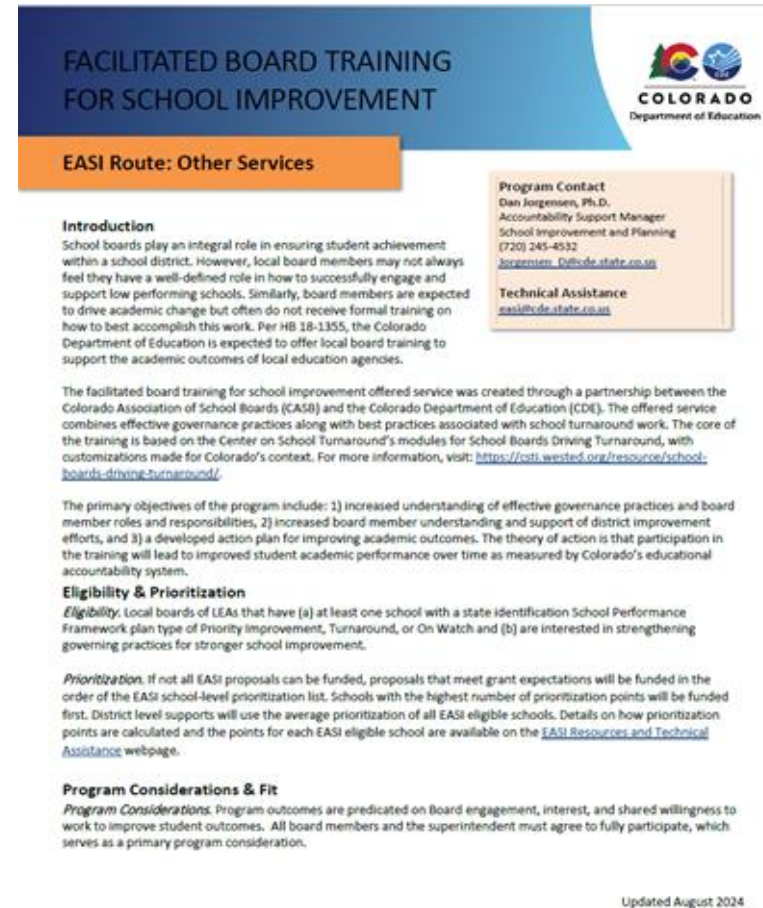
<https://www.cde.state.co.us/uip/uips-theroleoftheschoolboard-plandevlopment-adoption>

**SchoolView, CDE Data Tools/Resources:** <https://www.cde.state.co.us/schoolview>



# Facilitated Board Training for School Improvement, EASI Board Service

- **Overview:** The facilitated board training for school improvement service combines effective governance practices along with best practices associated with school turnaround work.
- **Eligibility:** All districts with with at least one school with a state identification that also have a board interested in strengthening governance practices are eligible to participate.
- **Additional Information:**  
<https://www.cde.state.co.us/fedprograms/facilitatedboardtraining>
- **Interested in participation?** Please contact Dan Jorgensen, at: [jorgensen\\_d@cde.state.co.us](mailto:jorgensen_d@cde.state.co.us).



The flyer is titled "FACILITATED BOARD TRAINING FOR SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT" and "EASI Route: Other Services". It features the Colorado Department of Education logo. The text is organized into sections: Introduction, Program Contact, Technical Assistance, Eligibility & Prioritization, and Program Considerations & Fit. The introduction explains the role of school boards and the purpose of the training. The program contact section lists Dan Jorgensen, Ph.D., as the Accountability Support Manager. The technical assistance section provides an email address. The eligibility and prioritization sections detail the requirements for participation and how schools are ranked. The program considerations section discusses the factors that influence funding and participation.

**FACILITATED BOARD TRAINING FOR SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT**

**EASI Route: Other Services**

**Program Contact**  
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Accountability Support Manager  
School Improvement and Planning  
(720) 245-4532  
[jorgensen\\_d@cde.state.co.us](mailto:jorgensen_d@cde.state.co.us)

**Technical Assistance**  
[easi@cde.state.co.us](mailto:easi@cde.state.co.us)

**Introduction**  
School boards play an integral role in ensuring student achievement within a school district. However, local board members may not always feel they have a well-defined role in how to successfully engage and support low performing schools. Similarly, board members are expected to drive academic change but often do not receive formal training on how to best accomplish this work. Per HB 18-1355, the Colorado Department of Education is expected to offer local board training to support the academic outcomes of local education agencies.

The facilitated board training for school improvement offered service was created through a partnership between the Colorado Association of School Boards (CASB) and the Colorado Department of Education (CDE). The offered service combines effective governance practices along with best practices associated with school turnaround work. The core of the training is based on the Center on School Turnaround's modules for School Boards Driving Turnaround, with customizations made for Colorado's context. For more information, visit: <https://csti.wested.org/resource/school-boards-driving-turnaround/>.

The primary objectives of the program include: 1) increased understanding of effective governance practices and board member roles and responsibilities, 2) increased board member understanding and support of district improvement efforts, and 3) a developed action plan for improving academic outcomes. The theory of action is that participation in the training will lead to improved student academic performance over time as measured by Colorado's educational accountability system.

**Eligibility & Prioritization**  
**Eligibility.** Local boards of LEAs that have (a) at least one school with a state identification School Performance Framework plan type of Priority Improvement, Turnaround, or On Watch and (b) are interested in strengthening governing practices for stronger school improvement.

**Prioritization.** If not all EASI proposals can be funded, proposals that meet grant expectations will be funded in the order of the EASI school-level prioritization list. Schools with the highest number of prioritization points will be funded first. District level supports will use the average prioritization of all EASI eligible schools. Details on how prioritization points are calculated and the points for each EASI eligible school are available on the [EASI Resources and Technical Assistance](#) webpage.

**Program Considerations & Fit**  
**Program Considerations.** Program outcomes are predicated on board engagement, interest, and shared willingness to work to improve student outcomes. All board members and the superintendent must agree to fully participate, which serves as a primary program consideration.

Updated August 2024

## CDE Session Strand



- **Aligning Planning Efforts to Drive Charter School Success (51).** Charter schools are often guided by multiple plans, each with unique requirements and goals. Based on the real-world experience of Bromley East Charter School, this session will help participants examine how to connect and align these planning efforts to strengthen coherence and improve student outcomes. Presenters will share a framework for coordinating change, highlight strategies for maximizing impact, and discuss common pitfalls to avoid.

***Session is Today, 1:30-2:30, Iris Room***

**Thank you!**



**Colorado Department of Education, Field Services & Supports**

Dan Jorgensen, PhD, District Support Specialist - Governance & Impact  
[jorgensen\\_d@cde.state.co.us](mailto:jorgensen_d@cde.state.co.us)

**Colorado Department of Education, Special Projects & Cross Office Initiatives**

Erin Loften, Supervisor, [loften\\_e@cde.state.co.us](mailto:loften_e@cde.state.co.us)

Accountability Website: [www.cde.state.co.us/accountability](http://www.cde.state.co.us/accountability)  
General Email: [accountability@cde.state.co.us](mailto:accountability@cde.state.co.us)



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move forward  
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